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TALON



OPERATION JOINT GUARD, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

THE TALON

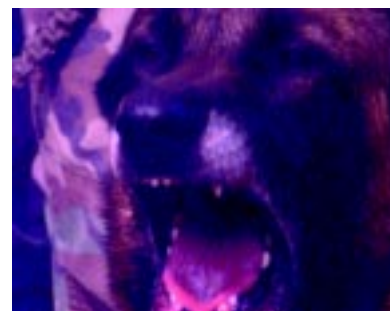
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On the Cover

Bosnian children and adults in the area of Brcko are taught English by Spc. Brian E. Genz, 10th Brigade Psychological Support unit.

From the Talon

The staff of the Talon encourages all submissions, especially from base camp public affairs representatives. All submissions are subject to editorial processes. Contact us at: The Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230, Sprint 762-5233. E-mail: talon@email-tc3.5sigcmd.army.mil.

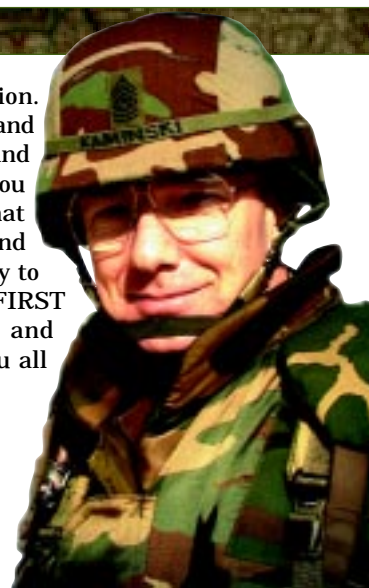
Up Front

Welcome troopers from both the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons, 2nd ACR! Congratulations on a near-perfect deployment; accident-free! HOO AHH! Traveling the number of miles you did without a major accident or catastrophe certainly is worthy of an honorable mention. GREAT JOB, keep up the great work! What a way to start the mission. Continue to do the right thing — one good thing leads to another.

We've been able to assemble the finest Total Force structure in modern time; active duty, National Guard and reserve component, not to mention all the 11 other participating NATO nations. Never before has there been so many different and various people working toward one common goal. Full mission accomplishment is still remarkably achieved. Everybody executing their parts, whatever they may be. Success is measured by the amount of attention to detail that is applied. And now, you are a part of it. I know you all must be pretty anxious to add another chapter to the already long and prestigious history of the 2nd ACR.

Finally, the mission rotation. Many are in a hurry to pack up and leave, others to unpack, setup and assume the mission. I assure you there is plenty of time to do what needs to be done. Deliberate and meticulous execution is the key to success. Remember, safety is FIRST and FOREMOST! Good luck and may God bless you all. See you all up front.

Command Sgt. Maj.
S. L. Kaminski
1st Infantry Division
(Forward)



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Walking the wire with MG Grange

By Staff Sgt. Gregory Binford
1st Inf. Div. PAO

One of the best ways to get to know soldiers and understand their outlook on a mission is to walk their patrol route. That's exactly what the commanding general of Task Force Eagle recently did during an inspection of Eagle Base's concertina-wire perimeter.

Maj. Gen. David L. Grange toured the area, often crossing difficult terrain, to see the territory on which he is briefed daily.

"Charlie Company runs the access points into Eagle Base. We patrol the northern perimeter and operate the observation points along the northern perimeter," Capt. Sam Whitehurst, commander of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, said.

Grange had requested the opportunity to inspect the work done on the edge of the wire "so he can become familiar with some of the challenges out here and the terrain itself, and he can see what our soldiers are doing every day as part of their mission," said Whitehurst.

Grange's three-hour "walkabout" included a ride in a Bradley fighting vehicle to inspect the perimeter. He stopped along the way to chat with soldiers who help ensure the base camp is kept safe and secure. As for the force protection, Grange said, "Nothing out here is broken. Is there room for improvement? Sure there is. It's all about force protection and situational awareness.

We need to continue to ensure that we monitor any possible threat and take the necessary steps to counter the threat and take care of our troops."

During his three hours walking in the footprints of the guard forces, Grange stopped at the bunkers and talked to the soldiers who vigilantly guard the base which contains the Task Force Eagle Headquarters, many of our units and the vital airlink outside Bosnia. He also spent time with soldiers he encountered along the way and gave a few of the coveted TFE coins to the sharp soldiers who briefed him.

"Every soldier out here is a force multiplier," Grange said. "I am impressed with the soldiers who are here. It is quite a testament to the Army's training methodology the way we've brought in 29 different patches, left shoulder patches, melded together, both active and reserve components — and that's just the U.S. patches. On top of that we have the 11 nations who are vital to this operation. This is a big job that is being handled very well by all levels of the chain of command and the soldiers in those units. Overall, I have been very impressed and I can't think of a better place and group of people to have the opportunity to command."

"We have come a long way toward getting this country back on its feet," Grange said.

"It is now a matter of the Entities and the civilian population taking the next step and desiring peace. They have clearly tasted the absence of war."

2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment arrives

By Sgt. Greg Waltman
372nd MPAD

Soldiers of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment were greeted by waves and the smiling faces of children as they rolled across the Sava River at into Bosnia-Herzegovina last week, beginning an eight-month-long deployment to assist in Operation Joint Guard.

Kids weren't the only ones glad to see the cavalry coming over the horizon.

Soldiers located at the various base camps throughout the theater welcomed the 2nd ACR with open arms. For many, it meant that their replacements had arrived.

For now, though, the 2nd ACR, based at Fort Polk, La., is part of a build up in troop strength during municipal elections throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina in September.

"We are here to support peacekeeping operations, to assist during elections, and to occupy base camps," said Capt. Robert E. Downs, commander of the regiment's Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Squadron.

"I think their arrival is important to us in two respects," said Lt. Col. James K. Greer, commander of 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, and Task Force 1-77. It provides us with additional support during the elections and it gives them additional transition time before they take over in October.

The 3rd Squadron of the 2nd ACR arrived Thursday at Camp McGovern and were anxious to get to work.

"We are ready to get started," said Lt.



Photo by Sgt. Greg Waltman

Members of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from Fort Polk, La., travel through the town of Brcko and down a dusty road on their way to Camp McGovern.

Col. Mark Corda, commander of 3rd Squad, 2nd ACR. We have been training hard in anticipation of the deployment.

Corda is excited about the deployment

and the opportunity to perform a mission that he believes suits a cavalry unit.

"This is a classic cavalry mission," said Corda referring to reconnaissance and area security. "From a soldier's standpoint, it's adventure. It's a great opportunity to exercise our skills as a soldier."

"We're very proud to take this mission on and we are ready for this mission," said Corda. "Our country has called."

The training at Fort Polk consisted of a mission rehearsal exercise, in which cavalry soldiers occupied constructed replicas of Camp Colt and Camp McGovern.

"They placed us in an environment pretty much like this one," said Downs. "We then practiced exercises such as weapons site inspections, logistic problems, and force protection, which is the number one priority."

The 2nd ACR worked closely with Task Force 1-77 before the deployment, using e-mail to communicate.

A cell of soldiers from the ACR also visited Camp McGovern earlier to get the lay of the land.

While the training is finished and the dust has settled on the roads heading south to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the work is just beginning for the members of the 2nd ACR, the oldest continuously serving regiment in the Army.

"We're very proud to add this chapter to the history of our regiment," said Corda. "The families can be proud back home."

ENGLISH

Local children learn through soldiers' off-time

By Pfc. Todd Edwards
372nd MPAD

Every Sunday morning, dozens of Bosnian citizens rise early to travel to a school near McGovern Base to learn English. The teachers are U.S. soldiers and civilians, giving up what would be a day off to bring the language of America into these people's lives.

Classes are free to the students, who come in all ages, from barely old enough to attend school, to middle-aged. They come of their own accord, motivated by a common desire to learn how to communicate in the language of their American guests.

The classes pay off both for the Bosnians and their American teachers, who become unofficial ambassadors for their respective countries.

U.S. soldiers and civilians who lead the classes say teaching means more than simply helping Bosnians learn to say simple phrases in English such as "Hello" and "I am going to the library." Through the classes, they can give a little bit of America to their students, said Spc. Brian E. Genz, a member of the 10th Brigade Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) Support Element, with Division Psychological Support, and an instructor of the intermediate classes.

"We are showing these people and the people who interact with them that we're not just a bunch of warriors walking around with weapons and tanks, that there's a humanitarian side to us. And that's important, because we're helping them to rebuild, and that's what we're really here for," he said.

Students are grouped by skill level, from beginning to advanced, said Genz, who teaches an intermediate-level class.

Instructors also help satisfy their students' insatiable curiosity about the U.S., often through the interpreters in each class, he said.

"They're very interested in learning about America and our way of life. We try to take everything and put it on two levels, so they learn the language and they also learn something about our country," said Genz.

Rewards can also be on a more personal level, he said.

"I feel a lot of empathy for them, and I wish I could give them all Christmas presents or buy them all an ice cream cone. But this is really the only tangible thing I can do to make a positive difference in their lives," said Genz.

The personal connection to this PSYOPS project inspires soldiers to seek help from support and church groups in America for additional materials for the classes. A member of the U.S. Park Service even sent for U.S. maps and geological surveys of America.

"I think that people recognize the good will and the spirit in-

involved," said Genz.

"I really think they want to learn English. They are working at it, and some of them are surprisingly good, even though they haven't been at it very long," said Linda B. Hoke, a University of Maryland field representative and a teacher of the beginning course.

Part of the reason the students keep coming back for the classes is the fun, pleasant atmosphere in which they are taught, said Genz.

"I think everybody opens up when they realize there's no pressure. They realize that it's for fun and they're own development, and there's no consequence for making a mistake," said Genz.

As he teaches, Genz uses expressive gestures and makes funny faces at his students. They laugh in unison, already fluent in the universal language of humor.

"It's good to be very animated with the students, because if I say everything to the translator and he says it to the students, it's not as active a learning process," said Genz.

The active learning process seems to be working, because news of the classes passes along by word of mouth, and people begin coming for the classes from hours away, said Genz. American soldiers often inspire Bosnians, children and adults, to learn to speak English.

"Just the presence of soldiers make people want to speak English. People see the American flag, and want to practice the English they remember from their youth," said Genz.

Teaching during the peacekeeping mission doesn't fail to have an effect on those who do it, giving them a sense of accomplishment.

"I've had some real beginners. I ask their name and help them respond. They take it word by word, saying their first words of English, and they just beam. I smile at them and they look so proud," said Hoke.

Teaching in addition to their normal duties for mostly personal reasons, the teachers spend a lot of their free time studying Serbo-Croatian, the language of Bosnia, to help understand their students needs more directly, Genz said.

"This is my saving grace while I'm here. I enjoy my job with PSYOPS, but it's a lot more rewarding when I go every Sunday and teach these children," said Genz.

Already anticipating great things from the efforts of a few individuals, Genz expects the experience of teaching to be carried with him forever.

"I think it's a very enriching experience for me personally, and when I tell my grandchildren about it, it's something I'll have a lot of pride in," said Genz.

Teaching is satisfying in the short term as well.

"I hope they'll remember what we did and that we care about peace and care about them," said Genz.



Photo by Pfc. Todd Edwards

Teaching an English class to Bosnian children and adults in the area of Brcko, is Spc. Brian E. Genz with the 10th Bde. PSYOPS.

Giving of yourself



Photo by Staff Sgt. Thomas C. Meeks

Assisted by the head nurse, Sgt. Mark Flitton of the 361st Psychological Operations Detachment hands out toys to the sick children at Tuzla Hospital

By Staff Sgt. Thomas C. Meeks
124th MPAD

There was no particular mission except to give gifts, happiness, and show compassion, but most of all, they wanted to show they care.

The members of the Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) section of Task Force 2-2, based at Camp Bedrock, delivered toys to the children's ward at Tuzla Hospital recently.

The kids could not speak directly with the soldiers because of the language barrier, but the excitement was written all over their faces.

"Their faces really lit up as soon as we walked in the door, even the parents seemed excited to see us here," said Army Reserve Spc. Michael Myhrvold, of the 320th PSYOPS Detachment from Portland, Ore.

Although PSYOPS units employ various techniques in their jobs, giving toys to children is not part of the normal mission.

"Although it's not our primary mission here, this will definitely boost SFOR's image — it can't do anything but. Giving

SFOR a good reputation will only enhance its effectiveness in theater," said Myhrvold.

"We have never done this before now. We have no underlying mission except to make the sick children in this hospital happy," said Sgt. Mark Flitton of the 361st Psychological Operations unit.

The SFOR soldiers visited children with many different ailments ranging from life threatening diseases to urinary tract infections to just the common flu.

In the infectious diseases ward, only one soldier was allowed to visit the children but had to be escorted by the nurse in charge.

"Most of these kids are pretty sick, some couldn't even get out of bed, but it felt really good to be able to get a smile on their face and not expect anything in return," said Flitton.

Flitton is accustomed to working with kids on a regular basis.

"As a professional golfer, I give golf lessons and trick shows to kids at local schools in my hometown," said Flitton, of Seattle.

Flitton's desire to make kids happy has not stopped simply because he's been deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"I love interacting with all kids. These kids were not involved in the war; they were just influenced by the war, and I just want to do something for them to make them smile again," he said.

Myhrvold, a native of Kaiser, Ore., is no stranger to charity and gift giving himself, as an active volunteer of Jimmy Carter's "Habitat for Humanity," he helps build homes for the underprivileged homeless families in Washington state.

"As the assistant manager of a target store in my home town, several employees volunteer to build homes for homeless families. It's exciting to see a less-fortunate family move into a home of their own," said Myhrvold.

The toys that were given to the children were all donated as a result of Sgt. Kelly S. Yarde, a member of the Fire Support Element, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.

"Sgt. Yarde called businesses in his hometown and got all these toys donated," said Flitton.

Yarde added that "children are a weak point with me. If I see a child in distress, I'll do anything to help them."

Working like dogs

By Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor
124th MPAD

Man's best friend is making life safer for soldiers taking part in the Bosnian peacekeeping mission.

Fifteen attack dogs patrol the base camps, sniff for bombs and check buildings for intruders. They also accompany soldiers on urban patrols, as a deterrent to violence.

Officially, they're known as MP working dogs. Loafing dogs need not apply.

They're trained to locate, attack and detain bad guys. They also have a secondary skill. Some are taught to detect bombs and others to snort the odors of illegal drugs.

All the dogs and their handlers are attached to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Infantry Division on Eagle Base.

"Dogs are useful because of their sense of smell," said Sgt. Willard Holland, 30, a handler from Goldsboro, N.C. "When we go to Burger King and get a Whopper, we smell the whopper. The dog smells the hamburger, the bun, the onions — each different part of the burger."

Holland and Spc. Robert Combs, 23, patrol Camp Demi, the southernmost U.S. base camp in Task Force Eagle. Holland's dog is named Herman, an explosives dog; Combs's dog is Nero, a drug dog. Both dogs are 8 years old.

Demi is located in a valley

surrounded by haystacks, cows and farmhouses. The two docile-looking Belgian Mallinois use their noses and keen sense of hearing to help Holland and Combs get a leg up on danger.

They have a calm demeanor, but when then sense danger or receive the proper command, they can turn so viscous that few humans would want to resist.

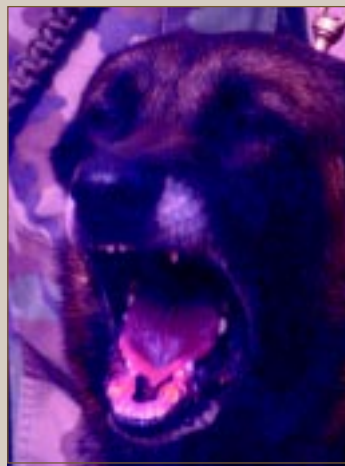


Photo by Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor

Nero, an Army patrol dog, bares his fangs for an attack during training at Camp Demi.

"If someone takes a weapon out and clicks it, he gets very aggressive," Combs said of Nero. "Dogs can sense fear. If someone is acting in an aggressive manner and they're afraid of the dog, that'll key the dog."

Combs said dogs can have a calming affect, even without an actual attack.

"If there's a fight in a bar, just the presence of the dog can

make people take off," he said. "They won't stick around to find out what the dog's going to do."

Holland and Herman have assisted other U.S. security agencies, such as the Secret Service. Herman enjoys working around people, but much of the work is behind the scenes, checking buildings and packages.

"When we take part in walking patrols, you actually go out and mingle with the people," he said. "That's one of the few things we do where people actually see us. It's not that we're hidden. It's just that we're part of the planning process."

Nero and Herman may be canines, but they don't live a dog's life in the Army.

When they're not working, they rest in their conexes — air conditioned container houses — like the other soldiers at Camp Demi.

A veterinarian checks them periodically and regulates their diet, and they get regular grooming from their handlers.

"They assign them to us just like a weapon, with a hand-receipt," said Combs.

When they're not working, Nero and Herman are as gentle as well-mannered family pets. Nero wagged his tail, sniffed a visitor and stood close for petting and stroking.

Holland said that the dogs require handlers to be firm and consistent. "Dogs are similar to children; they'll test their handlers," he said.

But at least they don't play the stereo too loud.

Air a

By Spc. J. M. Lowry
124th MPAD

Get the picture: a Task Force 1-41 team is inspecting a weapons storage site maintained by the Entities. The team finds unauthorized weaponry and ammunition. Entity soldiers resist and try to take over. Nearby residents begin to riot — blocking the ground team sent in to recover the unauthorized weapons and ammunition. There is no other route in or out.

The above is the situation; this is what happened.

The reaction: command decides to call for an air assault extraction team.

A lift — four helicopters with soldiers — is sent in to secure a landing zone, slingload the contraband to a helicopter and "get the hell out of Dodge."

This was an actual Task Force 1-41 training mission. If this had been a real scenario, task force soldiers would have been prepared.

This is why the Army trains. It must be ready to react to any situation.

Some task force soldiers had never participated in a nighttime helicopter airlift mission. And, for many young soldiers, it was the first time they had set foot on a helicopter.

What may be more unusual is that mechanized infantry soldiers and tankers were involved in a helicopter mission at all. Task Force soldiers from Com-

Electronic tests are critical to Bradley performance

By Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor
124th MPAD

Spc. Neil Gilbert wrestles with eight black tentacles as he wiggles through the turret of a Bradley fighting vehicle. A harsh Bosnian sun blasts the motor pool where he works, turning the inside of the turret into a sauna. Gilbert's shirt is soaked with sweat. Passing trucks kick up clouds of dust, but he is undeterred.

Gilbert and his supervisor, Sgt. Tracina Toliver, 33, of Washington, D.C., play an important role in the Bosnian peacekeeping effort. They ensure that the TOW and Dragon missiles carried on Bradleys will hit their targets, if it becomes necessary to fire.

"We make sure that all the electronics are functional," Toliver

said. "If our verification fails, this whole track (Bradley) is not mission capable. It's a small link that can break the whole chain."

She and Gilbert, both members of the 125th Forward Area Support Battalion of Fort Riley, Kan., are specialists in missile system maintenance. Their unit is a part of Task Force 1-41. They lug a suitcase sized electronic analyzer into the turret and then plug its thick black cables to eight test sockets in the gunner and commander's compartments.

The red eye of the analyzer blinks messages for about an hour as it runs through dozens of tests.

"We try to correct problems on the spot," said Gilbert, 21, of San Bernardino, Calif. "It could be anything from a switch to a lens to a cable."

Assault for tankers

pany A, 1-13 (Team Tank) are a good example.

"I liked the mission. Chances are slim that I'd be on an air assault mission," said Pvt. Ira B. Brownridge, a team tank mechanized infantryman, who provided security during the mission.

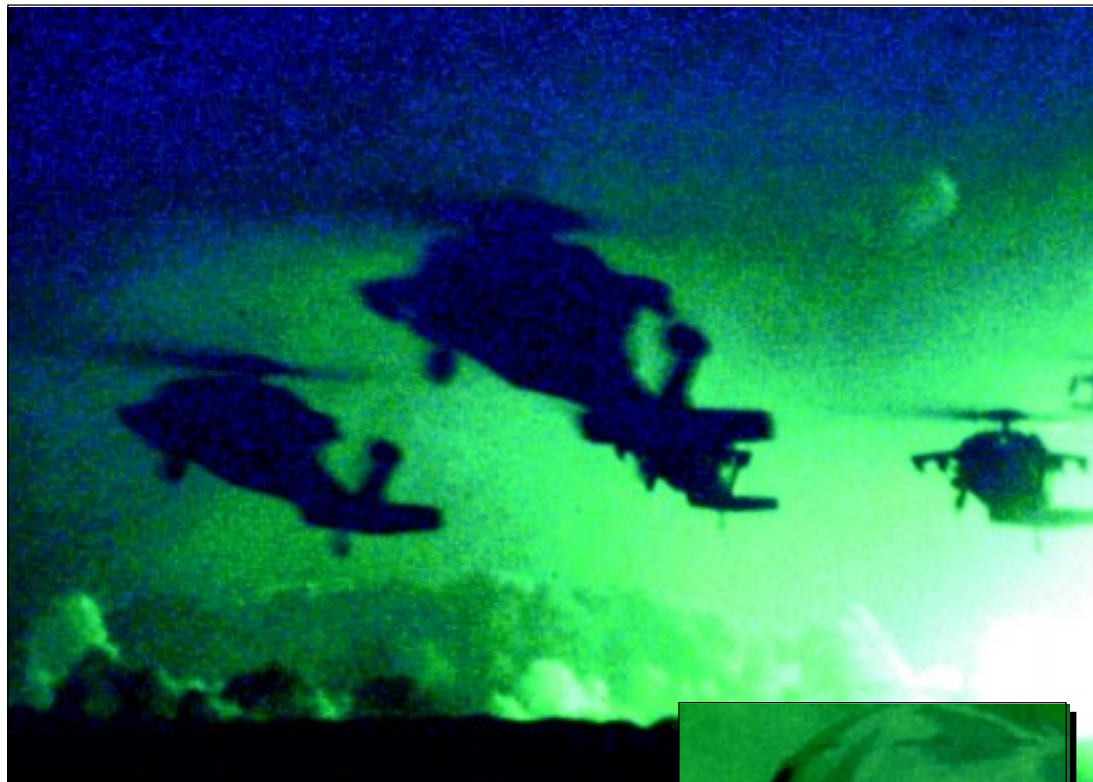
"No one would expect tankers to be on an air assault mission," said Pfc. Todd R. Klatt, who was the radio and telephone operator for Company A during the training exercise.

Veteran soldiers agreed.

"For a tank soldier, this may be a one-time career opportunity," said Staff Sgt. Martin Schwartz, Company A infantry squad leader and a soldier for 13 years.

On the evening of the exercise, attack helicopters — AH-64 Apaches — provided security, protection and an extra set of eyes for the team on the ground. UH-60 Blackhawks flew in low and carried the squads, or "chalks," as they are called when on helicopter missions.

When the helicopters landed, the chalks dismounted. Soldiers in three of the chalks provided landing zone security.



The other chalk broke up into two teams. One team slingloaded the unauthorized weapons and ammunition to the helicopter. The other team provided inner security for the slingload team.

The mission was planned to the second.

"We were on a time crunch the whole time. We had to have everything done to a time schedule and this was at night," said Staff Sgt. Johnny R. Knowles, infantry squad leader for Company A. Although the soldiers had night vision goggles, it was still difficult to see, he said.

"It was close to a real mission. It's always a possibility that while we're out there at a weapons storage site inspection that a problem like this could arise and we'd need the assets of an air assault team," said Schwartz.

As with real missions, soldiers faced unforeseen obstacles.

There were radio prob-

lems, and the pallet holding the weapons broke.

"We had to adapt and overcome when the pallet broke and when the helicopters came in late," Knowles said.

"The helicopter set us back. Instead of 15 minutes to get back to the rally point, we only had five," said Knowles.

Besides the first-timers on the training mission, they had experienced soldiers to slingload the weapons to the helicopter, although some hadn't performed the operation at night.

Soldiers in the 125th Forward Area Support Team (FAST) trained in helicopter loading at Fort Riley, Kan., their home station, because sometimes maintenance crews are called on to airlift parts, according to Cpl. Anthony L. Fisher, a 125th FAST mechanic and helicopter ground guide during the mission.



Photos by Spc. John Kinnaman

(Top Photo) The lift moving into the landing zone.

(Above) Spc. Michael Lucero radios his commander during the air assault mission. The mission involved mechanized infantry and tankers.

Why do we train mechanized infantrymen and tankers on an air assault mission?

The answer could probably best be answered by Knowles: "It could happen; that's why we train."



Company A, 1-13 (Team Tank) soldiers move out to the rally point.



Sgt. Jeffrie S. Corn, and Pfc. Jess W. Waterdown replace a window on a five-ton truck. Both are with the 201st Forward Area Support Team.

Story and Photos by Pfc. Todd Edwards
372nd MPAD

They say an Army marches on its stomach. Don't tell the maintenance guys that.

If a vehicle is damaged in a mine strike, or loses a track, or needs a transmission replaced, the mechanics in the mainte-

nance section become a soldier's best friends.

If the vehicle is part of the Task Force 1-77 at McGovern Base, it will end up in the shop of the 201st Forward Area Support Team (FAST).

"We know we're the ones that keep the task force rolling," said Spc. Lydell Cason, a tracked vehicle mechanic with Task Force

Fixing

1-77. Knowing their worth to the units they support is part of the identity of the soldiers of the FAST.

Providing maintenance and supply support for all of the units in the task force, the 201st FAST repairs everything from M-16s to main battle tanks, said Sgt. Gregory R. Ostheim, a tracked vehicle mechanic with the unit.

For the members of the FAST, their workload and 24-hour turnaround rate for vehicles in their shop speaks for itself.

"All you have to do is look on the job sheet, and see how many jobs we do, and there's no question of how valuable we are to the task force," said Cason.

Staying motivated to do their jobs is an important factor to their performance, he said. "If you have a group of soldiers out here who are motivated and morale is high, there isn't anything they won't do."

To be a member of the FAST, motivation is required. Like all mechanics at McGovern Base, they have to persevere against the elements as well as large work-



Spc. Lydell E. Cason, a tracked vehicle mechanic for the unit, repairs a Humvee for the 201st Forward Area Support Team.

everything FAST

loads to get the job done.

"When it's cold, and you hit your knuckles, you're going to cry. Or when it's summertime and you're underneath something and some dirt falls in your eye, you're going to cry. But regardless, you have to finish what you started, you've got to accomplish your mission," said Cason.

Spending time at McGovern has taught some of the members of the FAST a lot about their occupations, said Cason.

"I've found out new things about my job. There's more to it than just turning wrenches," said Cason.

That means having the ability to work on vehicles that are not named in their job descriptions, said Cason. Track mechanics learn to work on Humvees; light wheeled vehicle mechanics learn to work on M-1s, and even pull guard duty. Everyone also stands a chance to learn some supply work, and they even occasionally provide security and support for psychological operations missions, he said.

While out on these missions, the repair and supply personnel from the FAST often find themselves acting as impromptu ambassadors, Cason said, his teammates nodding their assent. This experience has added a lot to their understanding of the situation in Bosnia, he said.

"Inside the camp, you only see one side of turning wrenches, guard duty, whatever. But once you get outside, you actually see why and you know why we're here," said Cason.

Usually, there are always at least two members of the team gone on other duties, which causes the remaining people to band together to fill in the holes in their ranks, said Cason.

"It hurts us, but somebody is always able to take up the slack for that missing person," he said.

It's not as simple as that, however. The members of the FAST have to overcome frus-

trating circumstances to complete their tasks, said Cason.

"It stresses you out, because if you're doing something, and someone knows that one particular thing and they're not there, you have to ask who else knows it and try to compensate for that person," he said.

To deal with these problems, team members work hard to learn each other's jobs, said Cason. For example, two M-1 tank engines recently came into the shop for the first time.

"Normally, when a job comes in, they say 'This is what you will work on.' But when they dropped those engines down, everyone just ran to them. Even the ones who didn't know anything about them. We were all trying to teach the ones who didn't know about it, just so they'll know for later," he said.

To offer some relief against the difficulties they face at work, the members of the FAST try to make work as fun as possible, said Cason. "One day we were working on M-1s, and everybody stopped, and we had a big wrestling contest. Then we stopped the battle royale and went back to work again."

The mixture of having fun and taking care of business is supported by the leadership of the team, said Cason.

"We worked late that night, but the senior NCOs went out and treated all the mechanics to pizza that night, just for being there," he said.

The appreciation shown by the leaders helps build morale as much as anything else. "There's nothing better than being appreciated, especially as a mechanic," Cason said.

Battle royales, pizza parties and good feelings all contribute to a sense of team building. The big job that the 33 soldiers of the team face means they have to use teamwork to accomplish almost everything, he said.

"Everything works easier if you're with a team that knows how to work together. If you have people who fight against the team it's going to be a lot harder to accomplish your mission," said Cason.



Sgt. Jeffrie S. Corn, 201st Forward Area Support Team replaces a window in a five-ton truck.

"If I don't know something, I can ask someone else who does. And they'll always tell me, no problem."

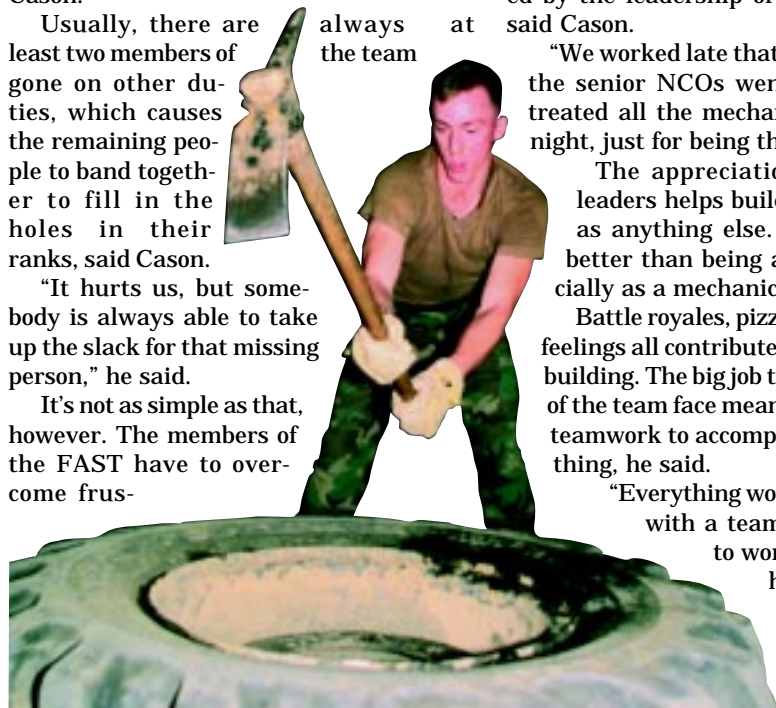
Working together well is part of the secret to their success, but the 201st soldiers also spend time together on their off-duty hours, said Cason.

Eating together, playing games, dominating at bingo and highly competitive ping pong are some of the favorite activities of the group, he said.

"I plan on keeping in touch with a lot of these people, I've made some good friends down here. Actually, being down here, you can't help but make friends," he said.

Working with the friends he's made and using the knowledge he has learned to help his teammates out is enough for Cason. The how's and the why's just aren't as important to him as is his job, he said.

"Coming in and turning wrenches is what makes me a happy camper," said Cason.



Spc. Eric L. Mabie, a tracked vehicle mechanic, breaks the seal on a five-ton truck tire for the 201st Forward Area Support Team.

Elvis spotted at local market

By Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor
124th MPAD

MEMICI, Bosnia-Herzegovina - Elvis has been sighted at a Bosnian flea-market, only weeks after thousands of Americans made their annual pilgrimage to Graceland in Memphis, Tenn., to mourn the 1977 death of the rotund rock 'n' roll idol.

The Bosnian version of Elvis is cherub-faced Elvis Krajinovic, 12, who came to the Memici-Virginia Market with his father to sell barbecued lamb. When sighted, the King's diminutive namesake was standing under a large awning, poised to slice off chunks of meat with a heavy cleaver.

Language barriers prevented an in-depth interview. But the cute, slightly bewildered boy was willing to pose for pictures. His father, a gaunt man with sunken cheeks and about three days' growth of beard, shook hands and uttered the only mutually understandable words: "Elvis, Elvis, Elvis."

Nearby, a Bosnian folk band — singer, violin, accordion and sargija (a long string instrument pronounced shargiya) — played a melody.

The market, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, is aimed at promoting trade and economic growth in

the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), a 20-kilometer-wide strip that separates the former warring entities.

"The purpose of the market is to help the community have a place to conduct commerce," said Maj. Ralph Perez, a civil affairs officer who monitors the market.

The market is located near the IEBL so it is accessible to residents of the Muslim-Croatian Bosnian Federation and the Serbian Republic. Serbian police officers, dressed in purple camouflage, stopped cars going to the market for inspections.

Federation police, dressed in green trousers and cream-colored shirts, directed traffic and provided security.

Perez's civil affairs team counted 20 vendors and 60 shoppers from the Serbian Republic. There were about 1,000 shoppers, altogether.

"At first there was a curiosity factor," said Perez. "People overwhelmed it and blocked the road. That wore off and it's back



t o
how it's sup-
posed to operate."

At the market, former enemies mingle to shop for tomatoes, watermelons, clothing, electronics and other household items.

Several sidewalk cafes have arisen there, serving Tuzlanski beer and demitasses of strong Bosnian coffee.

"People are building new businesses," Perez said. "It's just like a shopping center. Eventually, it will be what we know back home as a strip mall."

Enes Johnny Aganovic, 23, an Army translator, said foreign names such as Elvis are common in Bosnia.

Many residents of the former Yugoslavia went to Germany to work and began taking foreign names, he said.

But aside from that, Bosnians are well versed in rock 'n' roll, he said.

"We know Elvis is king," he said. "I think we know more about rock 'n' roll than you guys."

Three elderly women rest outside the market with a box of tomatoes they'll take home to eat. The market attracts shoppers from the Bosnian Federation and the Republika Srpska



Photo by Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor

Learning through Internet classes

By Sgt. Greg Waltman
372nd MPAD

While most college students are walking into classrooms this September, Staff Sgt. Stephen F. Jones will be taking part in Operation Joint Guard, but this will not stop him from logging into class via the Internet.

During the time he is stationed at Camp Sava on the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Jones will take part in the distance-learning program offered at Wake Technical Community College in Raleigh, N.C., to finish his degree in networking technologies.

Jones was entering his last semester of college before graduation when his National Guard unit, the 139th Rear Tactical Operations Center from Morrisville, N.C., found out they would be leaving for Croatia.

"I had one class left and had already registered when we received notification that we were being mobilized," said Jones.

Facing a dilemma, Jones talked to his dean about the final class he needed for graduation. The dean suggested that he log on to the Internet class.

"They are just starting this distance-learning program over the Internet," said Jones. "You check the web page where you pick up your assignments and when you finish them you can e-mail them back to the instructor."

It is also possible for Jones to sit in on a classroom discussion with other members taking part in the distance learning program.

"You can hold a conference over the Internet," said Jones. "You can't see each other, but you can see what they type. It's called Internet Relay Chat."

Jones earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Richmond at Virginia before joining the Army at the age of 30. He then returned to the classroom to pursue an interest that was sparked while he was on active duty.

"I was exposed to computers and networking," said Jones. "So when I got out, I went to build on the base of knowledge that I received in the Army. Straight from active duty to full-time college."

Jones joined the National Guard after his active duty tour. Then, while still in college, he began working for the National Guard as a civilian.

"I am a federal technician working as a computer specialist," said Jones. "I'm already working in the field. I do network administration, consult on the purchase of software, and troubleshoot network and personal computer problems."

While Jones has used his interest in computers to provide a living for himself, he has also used them as a tool to communicate with his family.

"We are an e-mailing family. We have five kids in the family, four of the kids and my mother have e-mail," said Jones.

While Jones sends messages back home to his relatives from Camp Sava, he doesn't

need a computer to talk with his younger brother, Maj. Robert H. Jones, who by coincidence was assigned to the 139th RTOC.

After Jones completes his college course and earns the right to graduate, he may not walk down the aisle and receive his sheepskin like the other students, but he'll be with at least one member of his family, and they can e-mail the others.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Conrad College

Mary Holland, an English instructor from the University of Maryland, teaches "Elements of English" at Eagle Base

Colleges offer variety of courses in different camps

By Staff Sgt. Conrad College
372nd MPAD

Three colleges, the University of Maryland, Central Texas College and City Colleges of Chicago, are offering courses and seminars to soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Eugene Hickman, education counselor at Eagle Base, said the offerings range from weekend seminars to seven-week college-credit courses. There are courses for all four years of college as well as graduate-level studies. Most of the courses are in English, math, history and government.

Courses by e-mail are also available, said Hickman, who is a retired Army first sergeant. This may be more convenient for some soldiers, who can log-on 24 hours per day, seven days per week, he said.

Current offerings include 27 classes, 11 seminars and 26 continuously open enrollment, Hickman said.

The Eagle Base education office on Tuzla Main is also responsible for courses offered at Tuzla West, Camp Bedrock and Guardian/Blue Factory. Other offices, such as the one at Camp McGovern, are responsible for education centers at other camps.

Twelve people work in the Tuzla Main Education Center. Sam Salmeson, a retired Marine, is the director of the Tuzla Main office, while Skip Baxter is the Task Force Eagle Army Continuing Education Center (ACES) coordinator. Hickman, Salmeson and Baxter are federal Civil Service employees, while the others work for the colleges they represent.

Jennifer Fairchild is the tester for the center. She administers many types of military tests, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and the DANTES Subject Skills Test (DSST). She said she enjoys her work here.

One of the students, Senior Airman Joseph Robbins, who works at Tuzla Air Base, said the military pays three-fourths of the cost. The course he is taking, Introduction to African-American Literature, cost him \$83.71 out-of-pocket. He said the hours work out well for him. He gets off duty at 1730 and his class begins at 1830, two evenings a week.

"When I'm at Ramstein Air Base (in Germany), I can't take courses, because I'm always going TDY (temporary duty). Here, I am on TDY, so they can't send me anywhere."

VEAP program set to expire soon

By Staff Sgt. Conrad College
372nd MPAD

The privilege of converting from the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), to the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB), expires on Oct. 8, 1997, according to Eugene Hickman, education counselor at Tuzla Main.

"On Oct. 9, 1996, a law was signed that allows people who have VEAP to convert from VEAP to the Montgomery GI Bill. The way the law is written, they have one year in which to make that conversion," Hickman said. "So this is good until Oct. 8, 1997. If they have not converted by that date, they will not have the opportunity to convert."

Hickman went on to explain in detail. "The key on making this conversion is you have to have entered the Army during the VEAP era, from Jan. 1, 1977, to June 30, 1985.

"You have to have had money in your VEAP account in order to make that conversion. If you had no money in your VEAP account, then you will not be allowed to make that conversion.

"The way the VEAP program works is the soldier can contribute up to \$2,700 and the government would match that two-for-one. So each soldier could have a maximum amount of \$8,100 available for education.

"This conversion opportunity will allow them to convert to the Montgomery GI Bill. The Montgomery GI Bill will allow them up to \$15,400.

"The requirement for making that conversion is they have to pay \$1,200 into the Montgomery GI Bill. But they will get back their \$2,700 that they contributed to VEAP.

"So we do the two things simultaneously. We fill out the conversion document from VEAP to the Montgomery GI Bill. They go to finance. They start the allotment for \$1,200 for the Montgomery GI Bill and, simultaneously, we request a reimbursement of education contributions. And they get back their \$2,700. So they're paying in \$1,200, but they're getting back \$2,700.

"Now, in order to prove that they're eligible for conversion, there's one of three documents that we can use. The first one is they get a persgram from finance. that states they are eligible for conversion.

"If they did not receive a persgram or if they lost a persgram, then we can look at their October 1996 Leave and Earnings Statement. That states how much money they had in their VEAP account.

"And the third document that we can look at that will prove they have money in their VEAP account is the January 1997 LES. That one also states how much money they have in their VEAP account.

"The requirement is that you were on active duty sometime during that 1977-1985 time frame.

"Now the sad part of this is that the majority of people who were VEAP-era do not have money in their VEAP accounts and we are all aware of that.

"With VEAP you always had the opportunity of putting money in or taking money out at any time. A lot people did have expenses come up and so they went ahead and took that money out for one reason or another."

For further details, contact Hickman or anyone at the education center.

HUMOR

How To Be Annoying 201

Staple papers in the middle

Hide dairy products in inaccessible places

Publicly investigate just how slowly you can make a "croaking" noise.

Change channels five minutes before the end of every show.

Tape pieces of "Sweating to the Oldies" over climatic parts of rental movies

Wear your BDUs backwards.

Begin all your sentences with "ooh la la."

ONLY TYPE IN UPPERCASE.

Only type in lower case.

Don't use punctuation either

Buy a large quantity of orange traffic cones and reroute whole streets.

Pay for you next pizza in pennies.

Tie jingle bells to your PT clothes

Repeat everything you say as a question?

Write "X-BURIED TREASURE" in random spots on all of someone's roadmaps.

Repeat the following conversation a dozen times: "Do you hear that?" "What?" "Never mind it's gone now."

Use chem lights on someone's birthday cake.

Demand that everyone address you as "Conquistador."

Wear a cape that says "Magnificent One."

As much as possible, skip rather than walk.

Stand over someone's shoulder, mumbling, as they read.

Pretend your computer's mouse is a CB radio, and talk to it.

Try playing the "William Tell Overture" by tapping on the bottom of your chin. When nearly done, announce, "no, wait, I messed it up," and repeat.

Routinely handcuff yourself to furniture, informing the curious that you don't want

to fall off, "in case the big one comes."

Deliberately hum songs that will remain lodged in co-workers' brains, such as "Feliz Navida," the Archies' "Sugar" or the Mr. Rodgers theme song.

While making presentations, occasionally bob your head like a parakeet

Lie obviously about trivial things such as the time of day.

Chew on pens you've borrowed.

Sing along at the opera.

Listen to 33 rpm records at 45 rpm speed, and claim the faster speed in necessary because of "your superior mental processing."

Construct your own "tricorder" and "scan" people with it, announcing the results.

Ask your co-workers mysterious questions, and then scribble their answers in a notebook. Mutter something about "mental elevations."

Make appointments for the 31st of September.